Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A device for monitoring the level of a solid substance in a container, the system comprising:

(a) a rod having a lower end positionable within the container in engagement with an uppermost surface of the solid substance in the container, an upper end positionable outside of the container and a central, rigid member connecting the lower end and the upper end and slidably positioned with regard to the container; and (b) a sensor positionable on the container and capable of initiating an alarm signal in response to the upper end of the rod engaging the sensor.

2. (Original) The device of claim 1 wherein the central member of the rod is formed from a number of segments.

3. (Original) The device of claim 2 wherein the segments are releasably secured to one another.

4. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 2 wherein a number of the segments include a recess at one end and a locking member opposite the recess so that individual segments may be attached and detached as needed.

5. (Currently Amended) The device of claim ~~1~~ 4 wherein rod segments are detached and placed through an opening in the sensor and then reattached so that the rod extends through ~~an~~ the opening in the sensor.

6. (Original) The device of claim 1 wherein the sensor includes at least one of: a switch engageable by the upper end of the rod, and a battery.

7. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 1 wherein the sensor includes a base member positionable on the container and an alarm mechanism remotely spaced in another room from the base member, wherein the base member transmits an operating signal to the alarm mechanism when engaged by the upper end of the rod.

8. (Currently Amended) A device for monitoring the level of a substance through a wall of a container, the device comprising a first sensing member postionable on the container adjacent a lower end of the container, the first sensing member including a means for sensing through the wall of a container without physically penetrating the container wall and a first housing securable to the container, a first detecting mechanism positioned within the housing, an alarm mechanism operably connected to the first detecting mechanism, and a first power source operably connected to the first detecting mechanism and the alarm mechanism.

9. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 8 wherein the first detecting mechanism is at least one of an induction-based detecting mechanism that senses the inductance of the substance and a capacitance-based detecting mechanism that senses the capacitance of the substance.

10. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 9 wherein the first detecting mechanism includes a stored lower limit capacitance value of a brine substance that is compared with an actual capacitance value of a brine substance sensed by the first detecting mechanism.

11. (Original) The device of claim 10 wherein the first sensing member includes a calibration mechanism operably connected to the first detecting mechanism and used to obtain the lower limit capacitance value.

12. (Original) The device of claim 9 wherein the first sensing member includes a timer operably connected to the first detecting mechanism and used to selectively operate the first detecting mechanism at predetermined intervals.

13. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 10 further comprising a second sensing member ~~positionable on the container adjacent an upper end of the container~~, the second sensing member including a second housing and a second detecting mechanism, wherein the second sensing member operates independently from the first sensing member to act as a variable gauge.

14. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 13 further comprising a second capacitive plate on ~~the~~ a board along with a ground plate.

15. (Currently Amended) The device of claim ~~9~~ 14 wherein the first power source is a battery operatively connected to the first detecting mechanism.

16. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 9 wherein the first detecting mechanism is calibrated to detect ~~at least one of:~~ a solid material within the container, and an aqueous material within the container.

17. (Currently Amended) The device of claim ~~9~~ 15 wherein the alarm mechanism is spaced from the first housing and receives a signal from the first detecting mechanism to operate the alarm mechanism.

18. (Currently Amended) The device of claim ~~9~~ 17 wherein the alarm mechanism emits at least one of: an audible alarm, and a visible alarm.

19. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 18 wherein the first detecting mechanism is an electromagnetic wave-based detecting mechanism.

20. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 9, wherein the alarm is located remotely from the sensor and wherein the sensor wirelessly transmits a signal to the alarm.

21. (Original) The device of claim 18, wherein the sensor transmits a signal to trigger the alarm.

22. (Currently Amended) A device for sensing a level of a substance in a container, comprising:

(a) a predetermined level of a substance including solid salt and water;

(b) a sensor for detecting when the substance reaches the predetermined level; and

(c) an alarm remotely triggered by the sensor when the predetermined level is reached.